

COALMINING RELATED DEATHS, HUNTER VALLEY, NSW 1901-1925 (2006)

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Publication available as:

- An A4 book of 404 pages with an index

Prices:

BOOK: \$35.00 + p&p

This work follows the earlier publication, *Nineteenth Century Coalmining Related Deaths, Hunter Valley, NSW*. In this relatively much shorter period of a quarter of a century, there occurred at least the 450 fatalities recorded here, as the result of accidents within the coal mines of the Hunter Valley, or other unfortunate deaths associated with the workings of those mines, such as drownings in colliery dams, and other mishaps.

The many deaths noted in the earlier volume were mainly, although not exclusively, within the Newcastle district and its environs. Extension into the twentieth century reveals a significant movement into the region generally known as 'The Coalfields', such as Maitland, Kurri Kurri and Cessnock, with some lessening in the concentration of fatalities in the older areas.

Not only is this movement evident readers may notice other changes. The new century seems to have brought significant advances. These include the increasing usage (and danger) of machinery in the process of winning coal, telephones for communication and the application of electricity to some processes. Reports of inquests reveal the increasingly active participation by union representatives in those proceedings. At the local level, too, voices could be heard, as with the miners at the Burwood Colliery who, in 1909 were instrumental in gaining their own ambulance service at the colliery, with the provision of a horse, vehicle and stabling.

Our first book recounted, among many other constants, the numerous stories of heroism and mateship, which continue to be found in many instances in the new century.

